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TWO

DISCOURSES

CONTAINING THE

HISTORY

OF THE

OLD NORTH AND NEW BRICK CHURCHES,

UNITED AS THE

SECOND CHURCH IN BOSTON,

* 7541.257

DELIVERED MAY 20, 1821,

AT THE

COMPLETION OF A CENTURY

FROM THE

DEDICATION OF THE PRESENT MEETING-HOUSE IN MIDDLE STREET.

BY HENRY WARE,

MINISTER OF THE SECOND CHURCH AND SOCIETY.

BOSTON:

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SERMON I.

THE OLD NORTH CHURCH.

HAGGAI II. 3.

Who is left among you that saw this House in her first glory?—

THE house, my brethren, in which we assemble to worship, has been occupied a hundred years. It was dedicated to that holy service to which it has always been sacred, on the tenth day of May, 1721;—a century from which date, allowing for the difference of style, is this very day completed. An epoch so interesting, so fitted to recall the remembrance of past years, and to excite to salutary contemplation on the vicissitudes of a transitory world, and the dispensations of an unchanging God; I am not willing to pass without explicit and large notice. It has been customary in our churches, on such an occasion, to review the way through which God has led them, and recount the history of his providence to their fathers. It is a good custom. And I doubt not, brethren, that you will be interested to go back with me, and trace the story of this church, and the character and doings of its ministers and people. To this object I purpose to devote the discourses of this day; and though none are left that saw the first glory of this house, we may thus all learn what it was, may find that it has at no period been withdrawn, and is not, even now, wholly departed.

We are not confined, however, in this survey, to the history of the last hundred years, but are led back through the seventy years previous. It is well known to many of you, though probably not to all, that the church in this place is formed by the union of two churches. When the Old North meeting-house, which stood at the head of North Square, had been destroyed by the British troops at the commencement of the revolutionary war, the minister and people united with the minister and people worshipping in this house, and became one church and congregation with them. The late venerable Dr. Lathrop, who so long ministered here, was ordained not over the church in this place, but over the church in North Square, and became pastor of the church in this place by the transfer of his relation after his own meeting-house had been destroyed. We are therefore equally interested in the history of the Old North, as of the New Brick* church, for it was equally the home of our ancestors. It is a history, too, that deserves our attention; for it was the second religious establishment in this important place, and numbers amongst its ministers some of the remarkable names of New England. To this, therefore, I ask your first attention.

The town of Boston having been settled in 1630, ten years after the landing at Plymouth, the first building for publick worship was erected in 1632. This was sufficient for the accommodation of the inhabitants for nearly twenty years. The population had then so increased as to render another building necessary; and accordingly the people in the north part of the town, which was most populous, built the second meeting-house, at the head of North Square, in

* The present building retains its original name of the New Brick. The church is known by the style of the Second Church, as it was a minister of the Second Church under whom the union was made. The name of the Old North is dropt.

1649.* The church was gathered there on the fifth day of June the next year, and consisted at first of seven members. (1.) A sermon was preached on the occasion by Samuel Mather,—a native of England, but educated at Harvard College,—who was earnestly solicited to remain as pastor of the church; but for reasons of which we know nothing he went to England, and was for twenty-one years minister in various places, an eminent and respected man. (2.) Afterward Mr. Norton, minister of Ipswich, who two years after became minister of the first church in this town; and Mr. Davenport of New Haven, who seventeen years after also became minister of the first church—both of them among the distinguished men of that period; and "sundry others who were officers in other churches, but likely to remove from the places where they were;"‡ were invited, unsuccessfully, to take charge of this infant church. For a few years, therefore, one of the brethren, Michael Powell, conducted the worship of God's house, and to such satisfaction that he would have been ordained Teacher, had it not been for the interference of the General Court, who "would not suffer one, that was illiterate as to academical education, to be called to the teaching office in such a place as Boston;"‡—a circumstance which is well worth noticing, as it exemplifies the jealous care with which our fathers guarded the dignity and character of the publick institutions of religion. After four years passed in this state, Mr. John Mayo, who on account of some "difficulties and discouragements" had left his church at Nosset in Plymouth colony, was called to the pastoral office here, and ordained the 9th of November, 1655. At the same time, Mr. Powell was ordained as Ruling

* I do not find any account of the Dedication, and cannot tell whether the meeting-house was first occupied in 1649 or 1650.

(1.) The figures refer to the notes at the end of the sermons.

‡ Church Records.

Elder of the church. Mr. Powell was soon after incapacitated for all labour by a paralytick affection, and his office became vacant.* I do not find that it was ever again filled.

About this time,† Increase Mather, brother of him before mentioned, returned to this country, and was soon invited to the office of teacher in the Second Church. After two years' hesitation he accepted on certain conditions, and was ordained the 27th day of May, 1664.

The pastor and teacher‡ continued labouring together until the year 1670; when Mr. Mayo's increasing infirmities made it necessary for his ministry to cease. Three years afterward he removed to Barnstable, and there spent the remainder of his days with his daughter. He died at Yarmouth in May, 1676, advanced in years, but at what precise age is not known. We have no means of acquainting ourselves with his history or character beyond what is here stated. (3.)

After the removal of Mr. Mayo, Dr. Mather held his office alone, until his son, Cotton Mather, was ordained as a colleague, May 13, 1684. During these years the church appears to have been prosperous, growing with the growth of the town. A great misfortune however befell them in the burning of the meeting-house in 1676. (4.) It was rebuilt the next year, and then stood for a century. The prosperity of the church after this event may be inferred from the circumstance, that within six years it became necessary to

* He died January 28, 1672—3. † September, 1661.

‡ In the early records of the church these titles are applied alternately to the ministers as they were settled, evidently without any difference in the nature, tenure, or duties of the office. Cotton Mather says, (Rat. Disc. p. 42.) that when the churches had more than one pastor, "one of them formerly was distinguished by the name of *teacher;* though in regard of their work and their power among these churches, it has been so much distinctio sine differentia, that more lately the distinction is less regarded."

build a gallery for the better accommodation of the hearers. (5.)

Indeed the character and reputation of Increase Mather were such, that we should expect to find a crowded attendance on his ministrations. He was one of the eminent men of his times, and few possessed and wielded a wider influence. And although there were those, as there always will be around an elevated man, especially if he take a leading part in political transactions, who were inimical to his authority; yet in church and state, in religious and in civil affairs, he was looked up to as a leader, equally active, distinguished and trusted. This was partly owing to the peculiar state of society amongst the early puritan settlers, who in their design of forming a "Christian Commonwealth," naturally placed much of the power of government in the hands of the rulers of the church: and the authority, which was in the first years exercised by the holy and able ministers who led the feeble colonists,* and by their energy and prayers sustained them in their dark days of fear and danger; continued to abide to the last with Increase Mather. We must not, however, attribute too much to the character of the age; much, doubtless, was owing to the rare qualities of the man. For three generations (6.) that family was distinguished by extraordinary gifts. There were many men amongst them on whom nature had bestowed the power to be great, and they evidenced that power in the influence with which they swayed their fellow men. Increase Mather had his full share of these qualities. Ardent, bold, enterprizing, and perhaps ambitious; conscious of his own power, religiously sensible of his obligations to exercise it

* No instance of this authority is more remarkable than that of Cotton, minister of the first church. "Whatever," says Hubbard, "Mr. Cotton delivered was soon put into an order of court, if of a civil, or set up as a practice in the church, if of an ecclesiastical concernment."

usefully; born and trained in a young colony struggling with hardships, and forcing its way through peril and fear; his mind fashioned by a father, who for conscience' sake had quitted all and settled in this hopeless land, and who had all the zeal and firmness which characterized the puritans of that age, a race eminently formed "to do and to dare;"—thus gifted and educated, he became peculiarly fit, and no wonder it was felt that he was fit, to have an ascendency and exercise a control. He had received the best education of his own country, he had completed it abroad, he had been driven from place to place, suffering for his religion, and presented with strong temptations to abandon it, thus acting a hurried and various part in the most trying times in the mother country—and after this discipline, so calculated to give firmness and character, he returned to labour in the service of this infant state. (7.) Nothing can be conceived more likely to prepare a man to act well his part in so peculiar a scene. He soon became eminent. Talents, learning, and virtue are always commanding. In that age a religious spirit was indispensable to honour and power. Mather had all. He was conspicuous for rigid piety where all were rigid, and eminent for talents and knowledge, where many had been eminent before him. It therefore is not strange that he acquired a control to which few are equal, and received and held honours which would not now be bestowed upon ministers.

We find proofs of his ascendency in several remarkable transactions. When King Charles II. in 1683, demanded from the colonies an unqualified resignation of their charters, it was principally by the authority and influence of Increase Mather that the people refused to make the surrender. He not only wrote upon the subject, but went to them in publick meeting, and exhorted them not with open eyes to rush upon their ruin, but to do their duty and trust the event

to God.* The example of Boston decided the question throughout the country; and this is one of the early instances in which the lead was taken by this town in those spirited measures of opposition to arbitrary oppression, for which the descendants of the puritans have been always distinguished. The charter, however, was forfeited; and a governour was sent over† with unlimited authority to make and administer what laws he might please. This authority he exercised in a most oppressive manner; which at length so excited the indignation of the people, that it was resolved to send an agent to England to represent their grievances to the king. (8.) No one was found so fitted to this important labour as Dr. Mather, who accordingly sailed for England in April, 1688. During that year the English revolution took place, and it was not until four years after that he accomplished his commission and returned home. Upon his arrival‡ with a new governour and another charter, the General Court appointed a day of solemn thanksgiving, with honourable mention of his exertions in behalf of the state. But the satisfaction which it yielded him was not unmixed. Many were dissatisfied with the result of his negotiations,‖ and parties were formed. Some of his old friends forsook him, and he found, like others before him, that the troubles and anxieties of political eminence are very insufficiently compensated by its honours.

* "The clergy," says Hutchinson, "turned the scale for the last time. The balance which they had held from the beginning, they were allowed to retain no longer."

† By James, in 1686.

‡ May 14, 1692.

‖ His task was undoubtedly a very difficult one, and he was himself far from being altogether satisfied with the terms he was able to obtain. This he acknowledges in the pamphlet which he published on the subject: but complains of the unreasonableness of those, who accused him of having done nothing, because he had not accomplished all that was desirable.

But his peculiar distinctions and happiness were in the church. He was eminently fitted for the work of the ministry, and held high rank as a writer and a preacher. His manner is represented to have been grave, dignified, and impressive. He never carried his notes into the pulpit, generally committing his sermons to memory, and oftentimes preaching extempore,—especially during the years in which he was president of the college, when he had little leisure for writing: for so devoted to him were his flock, that they would consent to his holding that office only on the condition that he continued their minister; and when it was made necessary for the president to reside in Cambridge, he resigned the office for his people's sake. (9.) His sermons are written in a manly and forcible style, less marked than might be expected by the peculiar faults of the age, and contain passages of the most powerful eloquence. His favourite topicks appear to have been those of practical religion, which he inculcated in all the severe strictness and occasional superstition of that age, and with great energy and warmth. Few sermons present a stronger image of the entire sincerity of the writer, and the anxious workings of his own feelings. They are remarkable for their copious historical illustrations,* which appear to have presented themselves spontaneously to his mind; and not less so for their frequent lamentations over the degeneracy and departing glory of New England. He bewailed in most pathetick strains the rapid decline, which he witnessed, from the strictness of the first settlers, and was often sounding the alarm of an exemplary vengeance to overtake that evil and perverse generation. "The interest of New England," he says, "is changed from a religious to a worldly interest." "Such sins as formerly were not known in New England, have now be-

* This is true as a general remark, though particularly so of his occasional sermons.

come common, such as swearing, sinful gaming, &c.; yea, the present generation, as to the body of it, is an unconverted generation." He elsewhere adds to this catalogue of sins, drunkenness, tavern hunting, even on Saturday evening, and neglect of the sabbath, the ordinances, and family worship. He cries out also against the lax discipline of the church, and the common substitution of a merely historical belief, for the rigid saving faith, which was once regarded as essential. (10.) These complaints sound strangely in our ears, who have been taught to believe that the manners of that age were universally pure, and to regard them with veneration as presenting a model for imitation. But such complaints are made in every age. There are always those that imagine the world is going backward, because it is not guided by their own rule, and does not resemble the picture their fancy has drawn of times that are past. And we should be comforted amidst the lamentations of present degeneracy, that they were equally loud a hundred and thirty years ago, and on account too of the same sins, which are said to be our peculiar curse. No doubt changes were perpetually occurring; and those who had known the country when it consisted, as we may say, of but one little family, would readily imagine every departure from the simplicity and strictness of family discipline and order to be evil; and yet it might be not only unavoidable, but upon the whole advantageous. The anxiety of Mather upon this head is a most honourable proof of his devotion to the welfare of religion and of his country; it was the spirit of genuine piety and patriotism. But it evinced also how much he was governed by the impressions of education, and the circumstances of the times in which he lived.

And these had made such impression on his mind, that he looked as fearfully on the growing charity, as on the growing vices of the age. He does not appear to have been bigoted or uncandid in his own private feelings. While in

London, he tells us, "he did his utmost to promote a union between the Presbyterian and Congregational churches;" and in a neighbouring town he assisted to ordain a minister of the Baptist denomination, and spoke with satisfaction of the part he had taken in it. And yet he could declaim loudly against toleration, and pronounce it to be fraught with the deadliest evils. "Toleration," he says, "of all religions and persuasions is the way to have no religion at all left." "I do believe that Antichrist hath not in this day a more probable way to advance the kingdom of darkness."* (11.)

This alarm in regard to the state and prospects of the country was mingled with that superstition of the age, which likened the Commonwealth to the commonwealth of Israel, and which accordingly expected perpetual interpositions of providence in favour or judgment. Every calamity—storm, fire, and sickness—he represented as special visitations of God for the sins of the people, and endeavoured with all the energy of his eloquence to rouse them to a sense of their sins, that they might by repentance avert the wrath.† On the appearance of the comets in 1680 and 1682, which he verily believed to be the forerunners of calamity, and published a considerable treatise in support of the opinion (12.)—he came forward with loud exhortations to repentance and reformation, denouncing the irritated anger of heaven, and confidently predicting a heavy day of vengeance and darkness.

It is not at all strange, when we consider the character of the times in which he lived, that his ardent and devout mind, which had been trained to "see God in every thing and every thing in God," should be thus affected with superstitious notions of the government of the world and the appearances of the heavens. The strongest and best minds

* Election Sermon.

† His sermons on such occasions were principally preached at the Thursday Lecture, and appear to have made an impression, as I find some of them passed through two editions, and some through a third.

are as liable as others to submit to the prevalent opinions of the age, and their doing so is no proof of deficiency in talents or in judgment. The character of this eminent man stands upon other grounds; and while it can be sustained upon them, it is but a small thing that in some points it partakes of the infirmities of the world in which he moved.

Such was the man by the light of whose instruction and example our church was blessed for more than sixty-two years, and who for sixty-six years was a preacher of the gospel. He died August 23, 1723, in the eighty-fifth year of his age;—undoubtedly one of the most distinguished men of the day; "one who was indeed a great man while yet but a young man, and a notable preacher of Christ in some of the greatest churches of England and Ireland, before he had been twenty years in the world. A great man, and one adorned with great endowments of knowledge and learning and prudence, which qualified him for stations and actions and even an agency for his country, wherein the most eminent persons in the nation, and three crowned heads took a kind notice of him." Indeed, whether you consider the extraordinary honours that attended him while living, or the general sentiment which has followed his memory, or consult the writings which he has left behind him; you will pronounce him a man richly endowed by nature, richly furnished by education, and deservedly numbered with the most pious, learned, and useful men of New England. The day of his death was a day of general mourning. An honourable funeral was given him, such as few citizens had been known to receive before, and every testimony of affection and veneration accompanied him to the tomb. The feelings of that day have passed away; the eyes that knew him and wept for him have long been sealed in death; and other generations have risen and gone by and been forgotten. But the name of Increase Mather still lives; and when hundreds of generations shall have sunk to irrecoverable oblivion, he

shall still be hailed, as one of the early worthies of New England.

The most important event relating to these churches, which occurred in the latter part of his ministry, was the division of his church, and the establishment of two new congregations. With the increase of the town, the Old North had become excessively crowded, and inconvenient for the worshippers. A secession accordingly took place, and the New North was built in 1714. In 1721 a difficulty arose among that people about the settlement of a minister, which issued in a separation and the building of the New Brick. In this difficulty the pastors of the Old North took an almost paternal interest, and the ordination of the first minister of the New Brick was the last which Increase Mather attended. Of these events I shall speak further in another place.

Cotton Mather, who had been colleague with his father for thirty-nine years, survived him but four years and a half. He died, after an illness of five weeks, February 13, 1728, the day after he had completed his sixty-fifth year, having been minister forty-four years. He was a man of equal fame with his father; and although I have already detained you so long, it is impossible to proceed without dwelling at some length on the character of the son.

His original powers of mind were doubtless equal to those of his father, and his industry and learning far superiour; but he was deficient in judgment and good taste, and therefore, with all his attainments, became rather an extraordinary than a great man. His character was a very mixed one. You would regard him with wonder and admiration, but hardly with a feeling of entire confidence. His religious sense was as strong as his father's, but it was mingled with more superstition, and was perpetually bordering on fanaticism, and running into the unprofitable observances of the ascetics. The desire of being useful was clearly one of his powerful ruling principles, and few men have formed so ex-

tensive systematick designs of active usefulness; yet he injured this by talking too much about it, and by a little too much parade in it. It is not easy to arrive at satisfactory views of his character. There was a mixture in it of so many qualities apparently inconsistent, some exciting your veneration and some your pity, that it is difficult to arrange them in one view so as to form a connected whole. While you look with astonishment at his labours, and acknowledge his praiseworthy zeal, you are mortified and vexed to find the most excellent designs frustrated, and the most indefatigable exertions wasted, through the mere want of a discriminating judgment. It makes you melancholy to observe, that after a life of almost incredible industry, after publishing three hundred and eighty-two books, large and small, and leaving others of vast labour behind him;* after years spent in unwearying efforts to do good, to extend knowledge, and promote religion, which, if well judged, might have placed him in the foremost rank of great men;—his name and works are viewed by posterity rather as phenomena to be talked about, than as substantial blessings.

His principal work, the Magnalia, has been much sought after as a curiosity; and that it has been so regarded is proof sufficient that its merit is quite equivocal. As a storehouse of documents and facts relating to the early history of the country, it may be consulted with advantage;† but it is

* The principal of these is his favourite work, about which he was occupied for many years, *Biblia Americana;* a learned illustration of the scriptures of the Old and New Testament. It was proposed after his death to publish it in three volumes folio, but the design was dropped for want of sufficient encouragement. It is now in the library of the Historical Society.

† "He knew more of the history of this country," says Dr. Chauncy, "from the beginning to this day, than any man in it; and could he have conveyed his knowledge with proportionable judgment, and the omission of a vain show of much learning, he would have given the best history of it."

so strangely written as to become heavy in the reader's hands, and so mingled with the credulity and puerility of the author's own mind, that even Neal, a cotemporary writer and correspondent, hardly ventured to cite him as an authority. Indeed, he was credulous to a deplorable degree of weakness, giving easy credit to all tales of supernatural appearances, providential interposition, and diabolical agency; relating them as matters of sober history; and by his authority and influence feeding the flame of superstition and persecution in which so many unhappy wretches perished on the accusation of witchcraft in 1692. That he not only fell in with this popular delusion, but rather fostered and excited it,* I am afraid is too plain to be doubted. He set his seal to all that was believed and done, to the shame of himself and his country, by publishing on the subject what aided the fury of the times, and will witness against him to the latest generation.

* I confess I have not been able to see so clearly into this matter as I could desire. The whole history of that delusion it appears to me lies very much in the dark. In regard to the agency of Cotton Mather, I presume it will not be questioned, though it may not be easy to decide precisely what was its nature or extent. Neal makes it evident that he favoured the delusion; and Watts, in a letter to Mather, tells him, Mr. Neal "hopes you will forgive him that he has not fallen into your sentiments exactly." *Hist. of N. E. vol. i. Hist. Coll. vol. v.* But there is no necessity of going so far for testimony, while we have his "Wonders of the Invisible World,"—the work to which I have alluded above. Mr. Brattle of Cambridge, in a letter published in the Historical Collections, says that Increase Mather "did utterly condemn" the proceedings of this period; and that "the Rev. Elders throughout the country, except three, are very much dissatisfied." Cotton Mather is not named as one of the three, and therefore probably when this letter was written had changed his opinion. For he did finally acknowledge in writing that things had been urged too far. Yet, in the life of his father, written thirty-two years after the delusion was at its height, he expressed his firm belief, that all was to be attributed to supernatural agency. I wish it were clear that he did not do more than any one in urging this belief to its fatal consequences.

As a preacher, he differed much from his father; having less strength, and more rhapsody, less dignity, and more declamation. The quaintness and singularity of his style was not well suited to the gravity of the pulpit, and appears to have been a subject of complaint even during his life time.* And yet there was so much warmth and zeal, so much earnestness and sincerity, so evident and pious longing to do good, "his spirits were so raised and all on fire," to use the expression of one who knew him well,† that his faults seem to have disappeared in his excellencies, and his preaching was impressive and effective. He seems to have been fond of dwelling on doctrinal subjects. "He was a vigorous defender," says his colleague, "of the reformed doctrines of grace, and of the mysteries of revealed religion, which he ever regarded as the excelling glory of the Christian dispensation." In other words, he was a zealous Calvinist, and it is certain that he was quite thorough in its creed. He did not forbear to state its tenets in their most contradictory and revolting form;—as if he gloried in being able to set them before him in full array, and thought to magnify the merit of that faith, which could receive them notwithstanding their intrinsick difficulties.‡

He was as zealous in his adherence to the Congregational mode of church discipline, as to the articles of his creed. This was a matter of great interest at the early periods of

* Neal complains, in a letter to Dr. Colman, of "the puns and jingles that attend all his writings;" and Mr. Prince, in his funeral sermon, says that "in his style he was somewhat singular, and not so agreeable to the gust of the age."

† Funeral sermon by Mr. Prince.

‡ This remark will be found principally exemplified in a sermon on Election and Reprobation, and his "Address" on Quakerism, entitled *Little Flocks guarded against grievous Wolves.* Also, in the complaints which he makes in the Magnalia of Baxter's departing in some respects from the strictness of the Calvinistick faith.

our history, when all remembered it freshly as the cause in which their fathers were driven from their homes, and were exceeding jealous of any attempt to innovate in matters of discipline, or to introduce, under any pretence, the burdens of the Episcopal church. "No church upon earth," he says, "so notably makes the terms of communion run parallel with the terms of salvation."* It was through this watchful and suspicious fear of innovation, that the church was induced, in 1697, to send a letter of admonition to the church in Charlestown "for betraying the liberties of the churches by putting into the hands of the whole inhabitants the choice of a minister." (13.)

The sentiments which he expressed concerning toleration were much more just and rational than those which I have quoted from his father, and mark the growing liberality of the age. "Persecution," he says, "for conscientious dissents in religion is the abomination of desolation; a thing whereof all wise and just men will say, Cursed be its anger, for it is fierce, and its wrath, for it is cruel."† He says elsewhere, that he "abhors it; has preached against it, and writ against it; he would have the Quakers treated with all imaginable civility, and not have the civil magistrate inflict the damage of a farthing for their consciences." With an inconsistency, however, perhaps not very rare, he refrained from all "civility" in his own treatment of them, and took every occasion to abuse them and make them odious.‡ He is not, however, the only man, who has imagined nothing short of imprisonment and the stake to be persecution. There are many, who with the utmost virulence have gone on destroying reputation and influence, while they were sedately talking

* Letter to Lord Barrington.

† Right Hand of Fellowship at the ordination of Mr. Prince, 1718.

‡ See divers passages in the Magnalia, and his Address, or Quakerism Displayed, which abounds with something like scurrility.

of toleration and the rights of conscience;—as if they thought, with some theorists on government, that life, liberty and property are the only good of man, and that influence and a good name, which make life liberty and property worth having, may be wantonly taken away without injustice.

In the contrast which I have mentioned, between what is to be admired and what is to be deplored, it would not be strange if we erred in our estimate of his character. His foibles thrust themselves upon our notice, and will not be hidden—while to learn what should redeem them, we must be acquainted with all the history and habits of the man. That there was something in these to redeem them, is clear from the great influence he sustained both in church and state, notwithstanding his palpable imperfections. He was more than once instrumental of great good to the state by this influence in times of excitement and confusion; and in the church he was certainly an object of great respect, and in spite of his assuming, to say the least, all the consequence that belonged to him, yet he was able to retain that consequence. Still it is clear, on the other hand, that it was then felt that something was wanting to complete the man; for in two vacancies* in the presidency of the college, when his unquestioned learning and talents and age gave him a clear claim to the office, and the people, who regarded him as a prodigy, called aloud for his election, yet the place was denied him, and given to men his inferiours in every respect, except judgment. This failing was palpable, and universally admitted, and this prevented him from being one of the greatest of men.

From his very childhood he had been distinguished by his attachment to religion and to books. He was graduated

* In 1706, when President Leverett was chosen, and in 1726, when Dr. Colman, Dr. Sewall, and Mr. Wadsworth were successively elected.

at the age of sixteen, the next year joined his father's church, and began to preach when eighteen, having by great pains cured himself of a stammering in his speech, which once threatened to forbid him the profession. His ministerial gifts were at once appreciated, and having been for some time assistant to his father, he was ordained as his colleague May 13, 1684. (14.) In this situation, the arduous duties of which he was far from slighting or neglecting, he was able to read and write more than any man probably ever did in America. "There were scarcely any books written," says Dr. Chauncy, "but he had some how or other got a sight of them. He was the greatest redeemer of time I ever knew." This was the opinion expressed by all who knew him, and it gained for him many honours, and an extensive correspondence among distinguished men abroad.

In the duties of the ministerial office he appears to have been eminently faithful and successful. He was much in the habit of private admonition and instruction, endeavouring, in his own peculiar way, to start some advice or reproof from every occurrence, and perpetually inventing new devices for doing good. "To do all the good he could to all," says one* who knew him intimately, "was his maxim, his study, his labour, his pleasure."—He was full of private labours to this end, and he favoured and assisted many publick institutions for this object. It was he that, in spite of obloquy, insults and threats, introduced the practice of inoculation for the small pox as a bar to the fatal ravages of that disease; and with the same ardour and disinterestedness, gave his time to other purposes of publick good, civil, as well as moral and religious. A book, which he wrote upon this subject of doing good,† is perhaps his most valuable work. Dr. Franklin attributed to it all his usefulness and eminence in life; and I

* Mr. Prince.

† "Essays to do good." It has been republished within a few years at Boston.

think no one could read it without receiving enlarged notions of his capacity and obligation to do good, and being stimulated to better attempts. With these active works of religion, he united an austerity of private discipline, that would have honoured a monastery. He kept frequent days of fasting, and nights of watching, sometimes for two and even three days together—regularly once a month, and occasionally once a week.

But it is impossible to proceed in particulars. I have gone far enough to shew what I intended, that, notwithstanding his great defects, which strike you at first view, and cannot be concealed, he absolutely was, as he was always acknowledged to be, a most wonderful man. It is barely doing him justice to say, in the language of his colleague,* that "the capacity of his mind, the readiness of his wit, the vastness of his reading, the strength of his memory, the variety and treasures of his learning, in printed works and in manuscripts, which contained a much greater share, the splendour of virtue, which, through the abundant grace of God, shone out in the constant tenour of a most entertaining and profitable conversation; his uncommon activity, his unwearied application, his extensive zeal, and numberless projects of doing good; these things, as they were united in him, proclaimed him to be truly an extraordinary person." When he died it was felt as a publick loss, and he was honoured with a funeral of uncommon splendour. He was mourned, according to Dr. Colman's expression, "as the first minister in the town—the first in age, in gifts, and in grace—the first in all the provinces of New England for universal literature and extensive services." (15.)

Cotton Mather was alone in the care of the church only four months during his whole ministry, Joshua Gee being ordained colleague with him soon after the death of his father.

* Mr. Gee's Sermon on his death.

Mr. Gee is represented on all hands as having been a very superiour man—not possessing popular talents, but of great profoundness and learning, excelling in argument, and capable of rising to any height of excellence; but unhappily of an indolent habit, which prevented his making that use of his advantages, which would have secured to him the ascendency for which he seems to have been formed. His character was particularly marked with zeal and fervour. He was somewhat bigoted to high Calvinism, and somewhat bitter in controversy.—He was an earnest promoter of the religious excitement, which prevailed throughout the country after Whitfield's first visit; and refused to open his eyes to the evils which attended it, even after many of its friends had become convinced of their existence. And when the Convention, in 1745, felt it a duty to bear testimony against certain errours in doctrine and practice, which prevailed to the great confusion of the churches,—he warmly and rather passionately opposed them; and was the occasion of a separate Convention in the following September, which issued a counter testimony. (16.) With all his great qualities, he was, as this transaction proves, rash and over-ardent; so that Dr. Chauncy, who knew him well, said, "it was happy Mr. Gee had an indolent turn; for with such fiery zeal and such talents, he would have made continual confusion in the churches."

His ministry in this church continued for twenty-five years. He had been an invalid for many years, and died, after a lingering illness, May 22, 1748, in the fifty-first year of his age. (17.)

He enjoyed the society of his venerable colleague but four years. When at his death the people looked round for one to succeed him, their choice fell upon his son, Samuel Mather, who was ordained over them June 21, 1732, about four years after his father's death. (18.) He was recommended to them, not only by their respect for the ancient family, but by his own character for diligence, zeal and learning, of

which he certainly possessed an uncommon share. He had already made himself known by several publications, especially by his Life of his father. He continued in the ministry but nine years, when, on account of some dissatisfaction with his preaching, which was thought by some to be not sufficiently explicit upon certain points of doctrine, together with some other grounds of uneasiness, a division took place in the church, and he with one party withdrew and erected a separate place of worship. This was in 1740 and 41, and possibly had some connexion with the religious excitements of that period, about which his colleague, Mr. Gee, was so zealous. He continued to be the minister of a separate congregation until his death, at the advanced age of seventy-nine years.* By his own directions he received a private funeral. Most of those who at that time were worshipping with him, returned to this church; and some are with us still.

After the removal of Mr. Mather, Gee remained sole pastor, until, in his declining health, Samuel Checkley was united with him the year before his death. (19.) He was the son of an eminent minister of the New South church, and is said to have been distinguished for a peculiar sort of eloquence, and an uncommon felicity in the devotional service of publick worship. He published nothing, except one sermon on the death of Mrs. Lydia Hutchinson, and left the records of the church so imperfect, that little can be learned from them of its state and fortunes during his connexion with it. He died, after a ministry of twenty-one years, on the 19th of March, 1768.

He was succeeded in the ministry by the late Dr. Lathrop, (20.) whom you well knew, and whom all that knew honoured. During his ministry the Old North meeting-house was de-

* June 27, 1785.

stroyed, and the church and congregation formed a union with those worshipping in this house.

Having thus brought down the account of the ancient church to the period of the union, I leave it for the present, that I may resume it in the afternoon, when I shall first have followed the history of the New Brick to the same period.

SERMON II.

THE NEW BRICK CHURCH.

I THIS morning spoke to you of the origin, establishment, and history of the Old North church, and of the lives and characters of its ministers, until its union with the New Brick at the close of the revolutionary war. I now go on to a similar account of the New Brick church. It originated in circumstances not very honourable or happy. It had its birth, not from the regular overflow of increasing population, nor was it a separation of brethren in the spirit of Christian love, but it was the offspring of heated passions and violent dissention. The circumstances, as far as can be positively ascertained, or are important to be known, appear to have been the following.

The New North church was established in 1714. It was regularly and peaceably gathered in the necessary course of a growing population. They had ordained one minister, the Rev. John Webb, and, agreeably to the custom of the times, were desirous of settling another in connexion with him. In consequence of some irregularities in the proceedings of those who were most active in the affair, "they fell," as their records express it, "into unhappy and divided circumstances." The principal ground of division was in regard to inviting a minister already settled. Many desired

to call to this place Mr. Peter Thacher, then over the church in Weymouth, a preacher of great popularity. Others esteemed it contrary to Congregational usage and principles; and in this dispute, fermented probably by private and local circumstances, of which we have little account, their passions became heated, and they approached at last, in a state of exasperation which gave little promise of unanimity, to the choice of a minister. The choice fell upon Mr. Thacher, which was ratified in the congregation by a majority of one, and that, it is said, was obtained by the casting vote of the minister. A great storm of trouble ensued. The ministers of the town, who unanimously agreed in disapproving the measures of the majority, interfered, and advised a reference of their difficulties to a council. This not being done, they gave the church to understand that they wished not to be invited to attend at the ordination.—The ordaining council was composed of only two ministers, one of whom came with the consent of his church, accompanied by delegates; and the other alone, in opposition to the vote of his church. The most violent attempts were made to prevent their proceeding, and it was only by being conducted by a private passage, that the council obtained possession of the meeting-house. Here a scene of the most outrageous and disgraceful tumult occurred. It is difficult to give credit to all the stories of the indecencies which were acted there; it is certain, however, that after one more ineffectual attempt at a mutual council, the ordination proceeded in the midst of a disorder little inferiour to the uproar in the theatre at Ephesus. The discontented members separated themselves, to the number of forty, and in the course of the next year erected the building in which we now worship. (1.)

This house was dedicated on the 10th of May, 1721. A day of prayer and fasting was kept on the occasion, and two discourses were delivered, one by Cotton Mather, many of whose congregation were engaged in the new design, and the

other by Mr. Wadsworth, minister of the first church, and afterward president of Harvard College. The house appears to have been regarded, at that time and for many years after, as a building of uncommon elegance and taste. The preacher expressed only the common opinion, when he said, " I suppose there is not in all the land a more beautiful house built for the worship of God, than this whereof you now appear to make a dedication to the Lord. But what will it signify," he added, " if the beauty of holiness be wanting." A church was gathered amongst the worshippers, May 22 of the next year, consisting of ten persons, six of whom were from the New North, and three of them had been original members of that church. (2.) One of the deacons chosen at this time, Thomas Lee, lived to be ninety years old, and died in 1769, having survived all the original members of this church and congregation.

On the same day, William Waldron was ordained the first pastor. (3.) His ministry was short, being only of five years' continuance, when he died at the age of thirty. The interests of the church appear to have flourished beneath his care. If we may judge by the representations of those who knew him, he was a man of uncommon promise. In the many sermons which were published on occasion of his death,* he is spoken of, not in the language of common-place eulogy, but in the genuine accents of unaffected lamentation, and sincere respect and love. There appears to have been a mixture of the severity and simplicity of an apostle, with affability and urbanity, which secured to him respect as a minister and warm attachment as a friend. Ministerial courage was an eminent trait of his character, and this was united, as you might expect to find it, with great activity in the service of the gospel. His death appears to have excited

* I have in my possession a volume containing sermons on the occasion by C. Mather, Webb, Foxcroft, (with a dedication by Cooper,) and Wadsworth. Sam. Mather also published a sermon.

a very unusual sympathy, not solely, it would seem, on account of his own distinguished worth, but as "he was the youngest minister by fourteen or fifteen years that had yet died in Boston," and because there had been, for several preceding years, a succession of deaths among the younger ministers almost as remarkable as that, which has desolated our churches for the last twenty years.* These circumstances doubtless contributed, together with the rapidity of his disease, to produce the deep and general feeling with which he was lamented.†

After an interval of about six months, William Welsteed, who had been for some time a respected tutor at the college, was invited to fill the place vacated by the death of Mr. Waldron, and was ordained on the 27th day of May, 1728. He preached his own ordination sermon. He continued to hold the office of pastor singly for a little more than ten years, when Mr. Ellis Gray was united with him as a colleague; in which relation they remained together fifteen years. (4.)

During this period of time, I am unable to say particularly what was the state of the congregation. I cannot learn that it was remarkably flourishing or remarkably otherwise,

* "We have seen within these few years many other sorrowful instances of early death among those of the ministerial order, and many more among Christians of a private character. I could reckon up above a dozen in the ministry, that have in a few years past been removed by mortality in their youth, or in the meridian of their days, who were all useful in their places and some of them eminently so." *Foxcroft's Sermon.*

He gives in a note a list of twenty-one who had lately died within the state, of whom "several were under thirty, and the most not above forty." Within what period of time, it is not stated. Mr. Cooper, refering to the same mortality, says, "the removal of valuable and excellent persons is, alas, no uncommon thing in this *land of dying.*" C. Mather, in the preface to his sermon, speaks in a similar strain.

† Foxcroft says, "I find his death as much regretted amongst us as almost any I have known;" and Cotton Mather speaks of the "sorrow, yea, a general, a very uncommon sorrow."

but it probably enjoyed about the ordinary share of prosperity. The two pastors were not among the most distinguished in town, though faithful and highly respectable men. During the great religious excitements of this period, they appear to have fallen in with the current. I find, however, from a well written, serious, animated sermon, delivered in 1742, at an ordination, by Mr. Gray, that he was fully aware of the dangers and evils of that period, and did not hesitate to speak of the "discord, division, bitterness, clamour, wrath, evil speaking, groundless surmises and jealousies," which prevailed in the churches. Neither of the ministers, however, were among the leaders on either side, though possibly it was to his opinion on this subject that Welsteed alluded, when he said, in his last illness, "I have in some things thought differently from my brethren, but I thank God I have constantly meant well."

It was at this period, that our evening lecture before the communion was established;* and at the same time the season of the communion was changed from every fourth week, to the first sabbath of every month. After two months, however, the vote was reconsidered, and the old term of rotation restored, which continues unchanged to the present time. It was during this period, the year after the ordination of Mr. Welsteed,† that the custom was dropped of singing by the separate reading of each line. In 1735, after much debate, it was determined to have two Ruling Elders in the church; an office which had become almost obsolete, and which, after this attempt to revive it, sunk forever.‡ In 1751, [July 10,] Watts' Psalms and Hymns were introduced in the worship of the sabbath, and continued in use until superseded by Bel-

* March 15, 1741. † July 31, 1729.

‡ This matter of the Ruling Elders was debated at numerous church meetings from March 17, 1735, to November 11, 1736;—at which time only one person (Deacon James Halsy) had been found to accept the office, and the church at last voted not to choose another.

knap's Collection in 1817, [Nov. 9,]—a period of sixty-six years.

The circumstances attending the death of these two ministers were remarkable and melancholy. Gray died suddenly on Lord's day, January 7, 1753, in the thirty-seventh year of his age, and fifteenth of his ministry. We have little means of knowing intimately his character, but he is represented to us as a man much respected, of early and uniform piety, remarkably given to hospitality, and directing his life, says Samuel Mather,* as if he had perpetually in view Paul's description of his own conversation;—"that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not by fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, he had his conversation in the world." If we might judge of his gifts in preaching by the two sermons which I have seen, we should assign him quite a respectable rank as a writer, and as a man of talents and piety.

His colleague, Welsteed, survived him not quite four months. He died on the 29th of April, having been struck with palsy the preceding Sunday, just after the commencement of the morning service, having lived fifty-seven years, and been minister twenty-five. Here was the melancholy spectacle of a church in mourning for two pastors at once, both cut off suddenly in the midst of life. And to render the visitation yet more affecting, they both died of the same disease, both died on the sabbath, on the communion sabbath, at the same time of day; each having preached for the last time to his own people, and the last sermon preached by both being on the same subject—"redeeming the time, because the days are evil."*

Welsteed is characterized as a man of eminent sincerity and integrity, "good natured, contented, patient, and always ready to every good office of morality and religion, and conscientiously diligent in his ministerial labours, especially

* Sermon after the death of Welsteed and Gray.

in his preparation for the pulpit." In preaching, it was remarked of him, that "he was careful not to insist on those points, about which wise and good Protestants have different sentiments;" but confined himself to "those doctrines of religion, which are not disputed amongst sound Protestants, and the impressive duties of repentance, faith, love and universal and constant obedience." This sufficiently expresses to us the nature of his views of religion, and it is corroborated by the circumstance, that he derived particular support in his last days, "from his upright walk before the Lord, and his *consciousness* of it." This fact is mentioned by the preacher on his death with great emphasis, as if to mark the character of his faith.*

After the death of Gray and Welsteed, the pastoral office was vacant eleven months, and was then filled by the instalment of Ebenezer Pemberton, previously minister of a Presbyterian church in New York, and a preacher of uncommon popularity, who attracted crowds by his captivating manner. In the earlier part of his life, he had been chaplain at Castle William, and in 1727† had been ordained minister of a Presbyterian church in New York. The ordination took place in the Old South church, and Dr. Colman preached. After a ministry in that city of twenty-two years, he, together with his colleague, Alexander Cumming, were obliged to relinquish their places on account of dissentions in the congregation, although it is said they took no part in the disputes. This was during the vacancy occasioned by the death of Mr. Welsteed, and he was soon invited to succeed him. The installation took place the 6th of March, 1754, and his ministry lasted twenty-three years. (5.)

It was during his ministry that the Old North meeting-house was destroyed; and when the inhabitants returned to their homes, after the evacuation of the town, this meeting-

* S. Mather's sermon. † August 9.

house being sufficiently large to accommodate both congregations, they worshipped together for three years, and then a junction was formed which has proved perpetual. (6.) Dr. Pemberton died before this event at the advanced age of seventy-two.* During the last years of his life, he had lost that extraordinary popularity, which followed him at first, and his manner was thought to be even so disagreeable, that the congregation in consequence became extremely thin. He was esteemed however as a faithful minister, and is stated to have been particularly remarkable for a "fervid kind" of piety. "He vehemently aspired after the spirit of the gospel, and had the consolations of it during a long and trying sickness."† He was a strict Calvinist, the last minister of that faith in this church, in his earlier days exceeding zealous against hereticks, though in later life he grew more candid. In these particulars he resembled Whitfield, of whom he was a warm admirer and adherent, and whose eulogy he pronounced at his death. He was not a man of remarkable powers of mind, but well acquainted with books, and had the command of a style not only correct, but elegant and oftentimes beautiful. He published a volume of sermons a few years before his death, on salvation by grace, which, besides the ordinary views of that subject, which you might expect from one of his faith, contain many appeals and exhortations that are not wanting in pathos and power.

When Dr. Lathrop took charge of these churches, after their union, he had been ordained over the Old North eleven years; and he afterward accomplished a faithful and honourable ministry of thirty-nine years. Of his life, character and labours, you do not need, brethren, that I should speak to you; for they are familiar to your memories. Many of you have grown up from childhood under his minis-

* September 15, 1777. † Dr. Eliot, Biog. Dictionary.

try, and retain for him a filial and affectionate respect; and all can remember his venerable and serene old age, when for years he presented the only hoary head that appeared in our pulpits, was the father amidst a numerous clergy much younger than himself, and became an object of increasing interest and value as he drew nearer his home. No one, who ever knew him at all, can forget the benignity of his appearance, the apostolical simplicity of his character, his gentleness and affectionateness of disposition, and his devotion to the best interests of his country and of man. After a long life, in which he gave himself much to publick cares, and was the faithful patron of many of our best institutions, he passed to his reward on the 4th day of January, 1816, at the age of seventy-six years.

His successor was ordained on the first day of the next year. (7.) The history of the remaining time I need not repeat. It has been a season of tranquillity and prosperity, for which we should be devoutly thankful. And I congratulate you, my brethren, that the century, which began in discord and strife, we have seen close in perfect harmony; that the congregations, which separated from each other with hostile feelings and enkindled passions, we see walking together in love, and minding the things that make for peace, and uniting as sister churches in the nearest offices of Christian fellowship. Long, long may this continue; never may it be interrupted; may no greetings, but those of love, ever pass between them;—but when, century after century, to the end of time, this day shall come round, may they be still found striving together only in love and good works—with one faith, one Lord, one baptism, one God and Father of all.

We have thus looked back upon the history of this united church through a series of one hundred and seventy years. We have traced its ancient branch from that time, when there was but one other in the town, and when the whole neighbouring country, instead of a flourishing land of

civilized inhabitants, presented to view only an uncultivated desert, trodden by savages, with here and there a few settlements, which had been reared as cities of refuge for persecuted puritans—who tilled the fields with their armour girded on, and kept their sabbaths and their fasts with muskets by their sides; from that perilous and romantick period we have traced it, step by step, seeing it grow under the abundant blessing of Heaven, and the toils of celebrated men, till it has sent off one after another company to erect new altars to the Most High, and at length blended itself with a younger church, which it had favoured in a day of weakness and fear, and then received again to its bosom the remnant of those, who had once gone from it in the day of division. We have traced the other branch from its birth, precisely a century ago, and followed it through the various discipline of God's judgment and mercy; till at length it was reconciled to its sister, and received beneath its roof its venerable ancestor: and now, to-day, we rejoice together in the way through which God has led us these forty years of our union. We notice the vicissitudes of the world, the flight of time, the providence of God toward our land, and gather lessons of wisdom from a consideration of the past. We look up to Him who planted and watered this vine, and has caused successive generations to see its beauty and partake of its fruit, and exclaim with the pious king of Israel, *The Lord our God be with us as he was with our fathers; let him not leave us nor forsake us!*

In the period which we have been thus surveying, two changes have taken place of such magnitude and importance, that they cannot escape our observation. The first is in regard to the observance of the ordinances of our faith. In the days of our fathers, the number of those, who felt so far bound to their religion as to observe its peculiar rites, was much larger than amongst ourselves. During the ministry of the Mathers, the average number of those annually ad-

mitted to the communion of the church, was twenty; in several years rising above fifty, and in that preceding the death of Cotton Mather, amounting to seventy-one. The number during his ministry was eight hundred and forty-eight; more than the whole number of communicants for the last seventy years. With respect to the other ordinance, the difference is quite as remarkable. The number of baptisms during the last thirty-nine years of the period just mentioned, was three thousand three hundred and eighty-four; being a yearly average of eighty-six, and rising in several instances to more than one hundred and thirty. This shows the difference of Christian fidelity in regard to the positive appointments of religion. Not that there is probably less real Christianity. There is no reason to believe, that the general mass of the community is worse in faith or in practice than at that time; in many respects it is certainly better. But in those days there was a strict adherence to all the forms and external observances of the gospel, on which it was the character of their faith to lay peculiar stress; whilst we are too much satisfied with a very general regard to what we call the spirit of religion, and are prone to undervalue its positive institutions. So that, while our places of publick worship are as fully and seriously attended, and the purposes of Christianity in ordinary life as well accomplished, the table of the Lord witnesses a thinner attendance,* and more of our children grow up without baptism. It is undoubtedly a better understanding of the nature of our Lord's kingdom, which elevates the spirit above the form. But why will not men learn, that they may avoid one extreme without rushing to

* Though I speak here in general terms, I refer particularly to this church; for I am not able to decide how far it may be warranted as a general remark. I know myself of many exceptions. To take for example the church in West Boston; it appears from a sermon lately published by the pastor, that the admissions to that church for the last sixteen years have been twenty on an average; which is equal to the best days of the Mathers.

the other? When will they feel the force of that admonition of our blessed Lord—*These ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone?*

The other change, to which I alluded, is that which has taken place in the views of religious faith, which have been here presented and professed. This is a most important and happy change. The church was established on those doctrines, into which men settled when they first broke from the Romish domination, which had been confirmed amidst the passion and excitements of contention with the English hierarchy, and were finally set in an authorized form during the violent storms of a civil and religious war. These doctrines our ancestors held, and the founders of this church received them as they were fashioned and exhibited by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster. One of the eminent puritans, the minister of the first company of pilgrims, had warned our fathers not to bind themselves to the faith as then established. His great mind perceived that the reformation was not yet accomplished. He was assured, he said, that God had still more light to break forth from his holy word; and he exhorted them not to stick where Calvin and Luther had left them, for they saw not all things. And yet, for a long time there they did stick. But at length the light he had predicted broke forth, and the eyes of one church after another were opened. For nearly fifty years, the doctrines of Calvin have not been heard within these walls; but a milder, happier faith has won sinners to heaven, and comforted the hearts that tremble at God's word. Brethren, I congratulate you on the change. I rejoice with you, that we are not bound down to any form of words of human device, nor enslaved by the fear of man to any set of opinions published to the world by pope, council, or assembly. I joy with you, that we can say to-day, *the Bible only is our creed;* we drink from none but this fountain of living waters; we have not committed, and we will not commit, either of the

two evils, the forsaking this, or the going to other cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.—You cannot value your privilege too highly. If there be any loud call for your gratitude to-day, it is for this blessing, in which it has pleased God to distinguish you beyond your fathers. And I entreat you, consider, if they, less favoured in the rights of conscience and the inestimable blessing of religious liberty, were yet so devoted and zealous men, of whom the world was not worthy,—consider what manner of persons you ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness. Put not from you their love of the scriptures, their faithful attendance on the publick and private worship of God, their eminent and firm attachment to principle, their fidelity in the religious education of their children. Let it never be said, that with increasing privileges there is a decreasing religion. But, as you hope at last to join them in that world, where your errours and their errours shall be alike removed, and all shall see with one eye, let it not be then found, that with your better knowledge you have fallen short in the race, while their higher attainments rise up to your shame and condemnation.

The occasion reminds us what a changing and dying world we live in. This house has stood for a hundred years —*and who is there left among you that saw it in its first glory!* Every one of the crowd that thronged it then has long since departed to his eternal home. Five successive ministers have laboured here, and gone to their account. Even in the memory of many present, every seat has changed its occupant. You seek the friends whom you once met here, and they are gone. Time has more than once swept clean these seats; and how soon will it be done again! The celebration of a day like this, no man can hope to see twice. When Xerxes looked upon his immense army, and thought that in a hundred years not one of that multitude would be living, he was overcome by the reflection, and wept aloud. I would not

have you *weep*, brethren, as the same thought passes your mind in looking round you now;—for the Christian in his church should regard time and death with other views, than the heathen at his army's head;—but I would to God you would pause and consider. The time is short. A century! What is a century? Ask the man of eighty, who has almost seen that term, and he will tell you it is as yesterday when it is past; it is but as a day and a night, and he that has survived it, does not feel that he has lived longer than when he had lived but twenty years. Yet in that space what changes occur! The strong men and women, and the very children of this assembly, shall in that time be no more numbered among the living; the youngest child here, yea, the very infant that we have this day offered in baptism, shall have witnessed all the fortunes of life, and perhaps worn a grey head for years, and perchance grown weary of a helpless and burdensome old age, and then slumbered for years in the mighty congregation of the dead, before a century shall close. In a century, cities flourish and decay, the boundaries of nations are broken up, and the earth changes all its inhabitants again and again. Observe what has taken place just around you during that which has now past. Instead of eleven churches in this town, you find twenty-eight, and all have been built or rebuilt within that time excepting two.* You find a flourishing city instead of a small town, a sovereign state for a dependent colony, a mighty nation for a few scattered provinces. And who can number the changes in the old eastern world!—the improvements, that have carried the sciences and arts to an unequalled perfection, and the convulsions and revolutions, that have removed again and again the landmarks of empire, and elevated the low and depressed the high amongst the nations, like the heaving of the earth in the throes of an earthquake! All this has been; and yet

* The New Brick and the Old South.

what is a century? He that should have lived through all, and look on the world in its present state, would almost feel as if the whole had been effected in a moment, by the wand of enchantment:—the time has fled like a dream. What then will time be to those, who know, as we do, that we have probably a small part of such a period to live! Oh, that we might learn so to number our days, that we should apply our hearts unto wisdom!

Finally, brethren, permit me to congratulate you on the prosperous condition in which this day finds you. These walls have stood a hundred years,—and they still stand firm. Whilst you have seen most of your sister churches compelled to destroy the ancient temples, in which they and their fathers had worshipped, lest they should fall upon them in ruins, and burdened with the costly labour of rearing other places of worship; you have the privilege of still assembling in this house of your ancestors, consecrated by age, and by the devout breathings of great and pious men of the times that are gone by; where the word of life has been preached to four successive generations, where every spot is hallowed as your appropriate religious home, and the very ground on which you stand is holy. There is something solemnly pleasing in the thought, that the walls which are echoing back the voice of your preacher and the songs of your praise, have resounded with those of venerable men, whose praise is in all the churches, that have long been sleeping in the dust, and are strangers to all themes but those of religion. And there is something delightful in the hope, that our children and children's children shall sit where we have been sitting, and seek the inspiration of Heaven on the same spot where we have found it. This hope, my friends, is yours. God, it is true, may commission his elements, and they shall shake this house to its foundations at once. The earthquake and storm have hitherto assailed it in vain, and it has thrice been rescued from devour-

ing flames.* Another visitation may destroy it without remedy. But in the ordinary course of providence it may see this day return,—and listen to the devout thanksgivings of those who shall assemble here—without one of us amongst them—to celebrate the mercy of Him, who, in the midst of change and death, is forever the same. And when that day shall come, oh, may it find our children wiser and purer and worthier that we. If God have any more light to break forth from his word, may it be theirs to see it and rejoice in it. And we too will rejoice in it,—as we doubt not the spirits of the good men that came up here to dedicate this house, are rejoicing in the greater light which God has poured upon us. May that day find all the darkness of errour and superstition which clouds *our* faith removed, and all the sins which defile *our* lives banished, and as many surrounding the table of their Lord, as worship at the altar of their God. Happy they that shall see that day! Thrice happy they that shall walk in that light! Yea, happy even these venerable walls, that shall have witnessed the gathering knowledge and growing virtue of many generations, and shall then hear prayers of warmer devotion, and the out-pouring of hearts lifted nearer to heaven, and shall learn something of that purer and more perfect worship, which is to be the employment and glory of the temple above! In that temple there shall be no change of day and night, and no revolution of time; a thousand years shall be but as one uninterrupted day; and no returning century shall warn us that life is drawing nearer to its close—for that life shall have no close. In that glorious temple, in that unchanging day, may it be our happiness to meet those venerable saints, who have crowded these courts before us, and the multitude of our posterity,

* A memorandum of Deacon Tudor in 1779 informs us, that "the sudden judgments of an earthquake, terrible storm, and fire have all three *done damage* to the meeting-house within his remembrance;" and records three instances in which it was in imminent danger of being consumed by fire.

who shall have received the beginning of that life on this spot, where their fathers worshipped. This is our heart's desire and prayer, that the power of the gospel may always be exhibited here in preparing men for salvation.

And in that great decisive day,
When God the nations shall survey,
May it before the world appear,
THOUSANDS WERE BORN TO GLORY HERE.

NOTES TO SERMON I.

(1.) p. 5. THE names of those first gathered in the church were, Michael Powell, James Ashwood, Christopher Gibson, John Philips, George Davis, Michael Wills, John Farnham. The original covenant is an instrument of some length, not at all in the manner of articles of faith, but simply an expression of unworthiness, of dependance on Jesus Christ, and of resolutions to walk agreeably to the gospel. The form, which was adopted and used in the reception of members afterward, was in these words:

"You do in this solemn presence, give up yourself, even your whole self, you and yours, to the true God in Jesus Christ, and to his people also according to the will of God, promising to walk with God and with this church of his, in all his holy ordinances, and to yield obedience to every truth of his, which has been or shall be made known to you as *your* duty, the Lord assisting you by his spirit and grace.

"We then, the church of Christ in this place, do receive you into the fellowship, and promise to walk towards you, and to watch over you as a member of this church, endeavouring your spiritual edification in Christ Jesus our Lord."

(2.) p. 5. SAMUEL MATHER was the son of Richard Mather, who came from England for conscience' sake in 1635, and was for many years a worthy minister in Dorchester. He was nine years old when he accompanied his father to New England, and was in the second class that was graduated at Harvard College. He was so much beloved as an instructer afterward, that, on his quitting the place, the students "put on tokens of mourning in their very garments for it." He went to England in 1650, to the disappointment of more than one church which had greatly desired his settlement. After five years spent in England and Scotland, he went to Dublin, and became senior fellow of Trinity College. Here, upon the king's restoration, he preached two sermons against the revival of the ceremonies of the English church, which were full of power and spirit, for

which he was silenced.* He then returned to England, and preached with great reputation until the act of conformity in 1662, under which he was one of the two thousand sufferers. He then returned to his church in Dublin, and preached to them without molestation in a private house the remainder of his life. He died October 29, 1671, aged 45—greatly respected and of extensive reputation as a preacher. During his last residence in Dublin, he had a pressing invitation from one of the churches in this town, according to Dr. Calamy, to become their minister.

(3.) p. 6. THERE is little known of Mr. Mayo, excepting what is contained in the records of the church in the handwriting of Increase Mather. I copy it here, because it has often been said, that nothing is known of him except that he was minister of the Second Church; and the records have been so carelessly examined, that in the Collections of the Historical Society (III. 258.) it is asserted, that "neither the time of his ordination nor decease is to be found in the records of the church."

"In the beginning of which year, [1672,] Mr. Mayo, the Pastor, likewise grew very infirm, inasmuch as the congregation was not able to hear and be edified; wherefore the Brethren (the Pastor manifesting his concurrence) desired the Teacher to take care for a supply of the congregation, that the worship of God may be upheld amongst us, which was for the present by him consented to, as Christ should enable him.

"On the 15th day of the 2d month, 1673, Mr. Mayo removed his person and goods also from Boston to reside with his daughter in Barnstable, where (and at Yarmouth) since he hath lived a private life; as not being able (through the infirmities of old age) to attend the work of the ministry. The ——— day of third month, [May,] 1676, he departed this life at Yarmouth, and was there buried."

I will add here, that through the kindness of the Rev. E. Q. Sewall, who examined at my request the church and town records of Barnstable, I have learned that Mr. Mayo was one of the original settlers of that town, but from what place he came does not appear. The Hon. John Davis has also favoured me with the sight of a passage in the records of the Plymouth church, which informs us that Mr. Mayo was Teacher in the church at Barnstable, while the Rev. John Lothropp was Pastor there, and was thence removed to Eastham [Nauset] upon the gathering of a church in that place, and was afterward settled in Boston. The Rev. Mr. Shaw of Eastham informs me, that he cannot find that such a person ever was minister in that place; that previous to his own settlement, there had been but three min-

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* These sermons I met with in the Boston Athenæum, and found in them passages in the finest style of that peculiar puritan eloquence, which is so happily imitated in Walter Scott's Romances.

isters, Mr. Treat, Mr. Webb and Mr. Cheever, with the exception of Mr. Osborn, who removed to another part of the town now called Orleans. He thinks, therefore, that Mr. Mayo's residence must have been only occasional in the town.—That nothing of Mr. Mayo's ministry appears on the church records of Eastham, does not, I think, argue any thing against his having been minister there; for he left no records at all of his ministry in Boston, and, if it were not for the testimony of other men, would not be known to have resided here.

(4.) p. 6. THIS fire broke out at five o'clock in the morning, November 27. It burnt forty-five dwelling houses, and several warehouses, besides the meeting-house. Its progress was stopped by a heavy rain. The following vote is all the notice contained in the records of this event. It would appear from the last clause, that it was customary at that time for some of the pews to be entered by a door through the side of the house.

"At a church meeting at our Deacon Philips his house, 3 of 10 month, 1676.

"Voted and agreed, that Mr. Richards, Brother Collicot, Brother Philips, Brother Tyril, Brother Hudson, be appointed as a committee, in order to the rebuilding of a meeting-house, for the comfortable attending the publick worship of God—and that Mr. K———, Mr. W. Taylor, Mr. Middlecott, and Mr. Anthony Checkley, be desired to join with the committee, in order to the transacting this affair. It was also agreed, that in case any that built pews in the meeting-house should see cause afterwards to leave them, the pews should be disposed of, not by them, but as the church should see cause. And that *no pews should be made with a door into the street.*"

(5.) p. 7. THIS was in 1682. Whether there were no gallery before, or whether this were an additional gallery, is not absolutely certain. The records of the church only say, "it was agreed that a gallery should be built for the boys to sit in, and that the place where they at present sit should be improved for pews." The probability is, that this was the gallery which, as I have been told, run along behind the pulpit.

(6.) p. 7. THE first was Richard Mather, born in 1596, who, having suffered for non-conformity, came to New England in 1635, and was ordained pastor of the church in Dorchester, August 23, 1636. He was "a distinguished ornament of the churches," very useful in the several synods of that century, an able writer in their defence, and a solid, judicious preacher. Mr. Higginson of Salem, speaking of his reply to Mr. Davenport, said that "he was a pattern to all the answerers in the world." He died April 22, 1669, while moderator of a council in Boston,—which occasioned the following epitaph: *Vixerat in synodis, moritur moderator in illis.*—He

left four sons: Samuel, the first, was mentioned in a former note. The second, Nathaniel, born in England, March 20, 1630, and graduated at Harvard College, 1647. He was minister for some years in England, and being ejected among the two thousand in 1662, went to Holland and settled at Rotterdam, succeeded his oldest brother at Dublin in 1671, afterward took charge of a church in London, and died July, 1697, aged 67. "There is upon his tomb-stone a long Latin inscription by Dr. Watts, which ascribes to him a high character for genius, learning, piety, and ministerial fidelity." The third son, Eleazar, was born May 13, 1637, and graduated at Harvard College in 1656; was ordained first minister at Northampton in 1661, and died July 24, 1669, aged 32. He appears not to have been inferiour to either of his brothers. The fourth son was Increase,—born June 21, 1639, graduated 1656.

(7.) p. 8. INCREASE MATHER began to preach the year after leaving college, and upon invitation from his brother in Dublin, sailed for England July 3, 1657. He proceeded master of arts in Trinity College, Dublin, the next year, "performing the usual exercise with great applause,"* and was chosen fellow; but not being able to remain on account of ill health, went to England, and for some time preached at Torrington; then went to the Island of Guernsey as preacher, on invitation of the governour; from thence, at the solicitation of his friends, removed to Gloucester, and again, after some time, returned to Guernsey, where he was at the time of the restoration. It was then required, that he should conform to the established church, or give up his living, and he accordingly returned to England. Here "he was offered a living of several hundreds a year, if he would forsake his principles; but he chose rather to trust God's providence, than violate the tranquillity of his own mind;"* and therefore he returned to New England after an absence of four years. In a memorandum now before me, written with his own hand, he says, "Providence so ordered, that, the Bishops and Ceremonies prevailing in England, I was constrained (that so I might keep my conscience pure) to leave that land; and being strangely disappointed and released as to an engagement I was under to go for Holland, I was returned to New England in September, 1661." He was the next week after his arrival invited to preach at the North Church, and continued preaching until ordained, May 27, 1664. His father gave him the charge.

I have said in the sermon that his settlement was conditional. The conditions were, "if hereafter the Lord should call me to greater service elsewhere, or in case of personal persecutions, wherein not they but I shall be aimed at, or of want of health, or if I should find that a competent mainte-

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* Non-conformist's Memorial, II. 245, 246.

nance for me and mine should not be offered,—then (my relation to them notwithstanding) I would be at liberty to return to England, or to remove elsewhere." From the account of his son in the *Remarkables*, it seems that he was far from having a comfortable maintenance during many years, and was even distressed with poverty.

(8.) p. 9. THIS is according to the representation of Hutchinson and others. The following minutes in the church records would seem to give a little different complexion to the affair.

"October 30, 1687. After the sermon and service of the afternoon ended, I desired the brethren of the church to stay in the meeting-house, and proposed to them, that their officers might in their name draw up an address of thanks to the king for his declaration, wherein he does promise us the free exercise of our religion, and that he will maintain us in the enjoyment of our rights and possessions. I told the brethren I would take their silence for consent. All were silent. Nemine contradicente.

"December 11, 1687. I desired the brethren to stay, and acquainted them, that it was thought needful that some one should be sent with an address of thanks to the king, for his gracious declaration; and that it had been proposed to me that I should go on the service. I told them, if they said to me, go, I would cast myself on the providence of God, and go in his name; but if they said to me, stay, I would not stir.

"Major Richards and ——— Way declared their willingness and free consent that I should go. I said to the brethren, if any of them were otherwise minded, I desired they would express themselves. Also, I would take their silence for consent. They were then all silent, and so did unanimously consent."

The account in the *Remarkables* agrees with this:—"The superiour gentlemen thought, that a well qualified person going over with the addresses of the churches to the king, might obtain some relief to the growing distresses of the country." The voting of addresses was strenuously opposed by many, who thought they discovered popery at the bottom. Hutchinson quotes a letter from President Danforth to Mather, dated November 8 of this year, in which he expresses his apprehensions very strongly.

(9.) p. 10. HE was twice chosen president of the college; first in 1681, when he declined the office because his church refused to part with him; and again in 1684, when he accepted it on the condition of still retaining his relation to his church. He relinquished the place in September, 1701, on account of an act of the General Court requiring the president to live at Cambridge. In the *Remarkables* of his life it is intimated, that this vote was aimed against him, personally, and was a measure which his enemies carried for the very purpose of removing him. Dr. Eliot, in his

Biographical Dictionary, attributes his resignation to the pressure of age and infirmities. I find only the following vote of his church on this subject:

"The Brethren of the church being assembled at the desire of the Governour and the General Assembly, and messengers from both houses in the General Assembly coming to them with a motion, that they would consent unto the removal of their Teacher's residence to the College in Cambridge—the ensuing vote was passed:—Being under the sense of the great benefit, we have long enjoyed, by the labour of our Reverend Pastor, Mr. Increase Mather, among us, it must needs be unreasonable and impossible for us to consent that his relation to us, and our enjoyment of him and them should cease.

"Nevertheless, the respect we have to the desire and welfare of the publick, does compel us to consent, that our good Pastor may so remove his personal residence to the College at Cambridge, as may be consistent with the continuance of his relation to us, and his visits of us with his publick administrations, as often as his health and strength may allow it."

(10.) p. 11. The expressions quoted in this place are from his Election Sermon, 1677. Sentiments and passages of a similar character may be found in his two sermons on the Comets, 1680 and 1682, in his volume of sermons on Providence, 1688, and in his series of discourses on the Beatitudes, 1717.

When I made this reference, I intended to quote here a few remarkable passages of some length; but my notes are swelling to such a size, that I am forced to omit them.

(11.) p. 12. It was not till after the sermons were in the press, that I was able to procure the *Remarkables*, or I should have modified the statement in this paragraph. In the thirteenth article of that book, we have an account of his change of sentiments on the subject of toleration; by which it appears, that the expressions I have quoted represent him only as he was in the earlier part of his life. This article is by far the best and most eloquently written passage, which I have met with in all Cotton Mather's works. Probably much of the illustration, and even the language, is taken from his father.

(12.) p. 12. The Treatise here referred to was published in 1683, and gives "an historical account of all the comets which have appeared from the beginning of the world," together with "the remarkable events which have followed them," and, as he supposed, were predicted by them. It is a work of considerable labour, showing an extensive acquaintance with history, and written in a very good style. The credulity of the age peeps out in some curious stories,—which I intended to copy when I referred to this place, but am compelled to omit for want of room.

(13.) p. 18. "1697, 4d. 6m. [August.] THIS day the church voted a letter of admonition to the church in Charlestown, for betraying the liberties of the churches in their late putting into the hands of the whole inhabitants the choice of a minister."

I have noticed this vote particularly, because it is sometimes attempted to make us believe, that the choice of ministers by the people, instead of the church, is a modern innovation, opposed to the uniform usage in times past. Here is an example to the contrary of as long ago as one hundred and twenty-four years; and the example and opinion of the church in Charlestown are as valuable in settling the question of *usage*, as those of any other church. It satisfies us that usage is not invariable, and that the principle, so far from being settled, was actually contested from the first. Accordingly, Cotton Mather acknowledges, "Many people would not allow the church any privilege to go before them in the choice of a pastor." *Ratio Disciplinæ*, *p.* 16. And from the following passage (*Rat. Disc. p.* 17.) it is evident that the congregation had not only, in some instances, claimed and exercised the right against the church, but that the church had often found it necessary, in order to preserve the appearance of a control, which they felt they could not exercise, to resort to so numerous a nomination, as to leave none for the people to choose whom *they* had not chosen.—"The churches do, sometimes, by their vote, make a nomination of three or four candidates, for whom the majority of the brethren have so voted, that whomsoever of these the choice falls upon, it may still *be said*,—the church has chosen him." So that, even at that time, the principle was so far acknowledged unsound, as to be satisfied with a mere form and show.

(14.) p. 20. COTTON MATHER was invited to assist his father in preaching, once a fortnight, September 27, 1680, (having been graduated two years.) The following February he was requested to do it "once every Lord's day." In December, 1682, the church expressed their great satisfaction, and desired that his labours might still be continued with a view to his settlement. In January, 1683, they gave him a unanimous call, and another impatient one in August, 1684. There is an errour in the sermon respecting the date of the ordination. It was in 1685—as will be seen by the following extract from the church records:

"2d month, [April,] 5th day, 1685. The brethren stayed in the meeting-house and unanimously consented, that the 13th day of May should be the day for my son Cotton's ordination as their pastor; and that letters should be sent to the two churches in Boston, to Charlestown, Cambridge, Roxbury, Dorchester, to desire them to send their messengers *to give us the right hand of fellowship*; that Mr. Allen and Mr. Willard should be desired to join with myself in imposing hands."

(15.) p. 21. THE ministry of the two Mathers continued during sixty-four years, besides nearly three years that passed before the ordination of Increase. The record of church members during this period is very careful and complete, there being no less than three separate catalogues. The whole number is eleven hundred and four. The record of baptisms is complete only after the year 1689, from which time to 1728, (thirty-nine years) the whole number recorded is three thousand three hundred and eighty-four.

The first instance of any one being received to baptism by the half-way covenant, as it is called, appears to have been January 15, 1693; when I find the following minute:—"Received into covenant Mary Sunderland; and her son John baptised. They being the first so admitted, in pursuance of the church's addresses unto me for that purpose and practice." The half-way covenant has been laid aside since April, 1786.

Collections for charitable and religious purposes were frequent during this period, and I have been surprised at the amount of them. £62 for redeeming captives from the Indians; £53 for redeeming two persons from Turkish captivity; £80 for relieving three young men from the same; £44 for the relief of the poor inhabitants of frontier towns in the east; £53 at fast for the poor, and £60 the same year at thanksgiving for propagation of the gospel; and in 1726 a large contribution was distributed, partly for the support of the ministry in destitute places, and partly for the distribution of Bibles and other pious books. The church had an "*Evangelical Treasury*," for the purpose of promoting religious objects, and distributing Bibles, from which considerable sums were frequently appropriated. This was not very different from a Bible society.

It may gratify some to see in this connexion, a copy of a memorandum, which I found amongst Deacon Tudor's papers, of the collections in the different churches "for the sufferers in the great fire, March 20, 1760, on and round Oliver's Dock, part of King Street, &c." It may serve as another link between the charity of Boston at the present day, and the year 1698—when C. Mather said in a sermon, "For *charity*, I may indeed speak it without flattery, this town has not many equals on the face of the earth."

Brattle Street, £3407. Old South, 1860. King's Chapel, 960. West Church, 992. First Church, 1050. New Brick, 445. Old North, 418. New North, 1467. Mr. Mather's, 140. Federal Street, 209. Mr. Cundy's 188. Mr. Bound's, 145.

(16.) p. 22. THE pamphlet published by the Convention was entitled, "The Testimony of the pastors of the churches in the Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, at their annual Convention in Boston, May 25, 1743, against several errours in doctrine, and disorders in practice, which have of late obtained in various parts of the land, &c." Mr. Gee

published "A Letter to the Rev. Nathaniel Eells, Moderator of the late Convention, &c. containing some remarks on their printed Testimony." In this he complains that the *title* of the pamphlet was calculated to mislead; that the pamphlet itself was adapted to give false impressions abroad and at home of the state of the churches; that owing to the thinness of the Convention, the real opinion of the ministers of the province was not represented; and that no testimony was suffered to be brought forward in favour of the revivals in the land; and in order to attain these objects, he publishes the design of another meeting of ministers, to be held the day after commencement, [July 7.] The result of this meeting was "The Testimony and Advice of an Assembly of pastors of churches in New England, &c." which, at the same time that it spoke favourably of the great religious work, acknowledged that it was accompanied with evils and dangers, and warned against them. It was signed by fifty-three ministers, and by fifteen others, who added a stronger protest against itinerancy, and the intruding into parishes without consent of their ministers. Besides these, separate testimonies to about the same purport from absent ministers, were added in an appendix, and increased the whole number of names to one hundred and eleven.

Gee's attack upon the Convention was answered very satisfactorily by Mr. Prescott of Salem, and Mr. Hancock of Braintree, who make it evident that he wrote in great hastiness of temper, and under the influence of what he regarded a personal affront. They prove several of his statements to be incorrect, and completely defend the doings of the Convention. Dr. Chauncy, who had been personally assailed by Mr. Gee, defended himself in a letter published in the Boston Evening Post of June 24th, and Mr. Gee, according to Mr. Hancock, retracted.

Another meeting of the "Assembly" was held in September, 1745, when a further defence was attempted of the religious excitements of the country. This second "Testimony" was signed by Prince, Webb and Gee, of Boston, and twenty-one others.

There were also published, in this feverish season, two "Testimonies" of laymen against the prevalent evils of the churches.

(17.) p. 22. Mr. Gee's parents were members of this church, to which they were admitted by dismission from the old church, May 2, 1697. He was himself admitted to the church May 13, 1716; was graduated at Harvard College, 1717; called by the church, October 22, 1723; ordained December 18. [He had been a candidate at the New Brick with Mr. Waldron in 1721; and had a call to settle in Portsmouth in 1723.] The council consisted of "the six churches of the united brethren in this town, and the church in Roxbury." C. Mather gave the charge. On the 19th day of the next February, I find the following record of C. Mather:—"The first baptism administered by Mr. Gee; and indeed the first that has been

administered by any hands but those of *Mather* (father and son) in the Old North church for more than half a hundred years together."

It would seem, from the records of the church, that Mr. Gee was a great promoter of prayer meetings for the revival of religion, which were frequently held during his ministry. The church is also indebted to him for the establishment of a library for the use of its pastors, to which he made large donations of valuable books. The church originally exercised a constant superintendence over its concerns by a committee, and provided occasionally for its increase. For a long time, however, this has been neglected, and many of the books have been lost. There are now about a hundred volumes, principally old folios, and many of them very valuable.

It was during the ministry of Mr. Gee, in 1733, that the celebrated difficulties in the first church in Salem occurred, which occasioned its exclusion for some time from the communion of many of the churches of the state. The Old North church, as appears from the records, which are full and minute upon this subject, took an active and leading part in this work of inquiry and discipline. After writing to and visiting the church and minister in Salem, it summoned an ecclesiastical council to proceed in the business, and "join with us in taking the second step of the third way of communion, wherein we have been visiting the first church of Christ in Salem." The minister and church refused to be disciplined, and were in consequence shut out from Christian fellowship for many years. It is not until October, 1745, that I find a letter of penitent acknowledgment, entreating to be restored to communion, was received and acted upon by the Old North church, who took off the sentence of non-communion, with the express exception of the late minister.

(18.) p. 22. Mr. Mather was chosen, January 28, 1732, by sixty-nine votes out of one hundred and twelve. The council at his ordination was composed of the churches of Boston, Roxbury, Charlestown and Cambridge. Dr. Colman gave the charge.

The number of the church that withdrew with him were thirty men and sixty-three women; the number that remained were eighty men and one hundred and eighty-three women. The date of their dismission is December 21, 1741. The house which they built [at the corner of North Bennet Street] is now occupied by a society of Universalists.

(19.) p. 23. Mr. Checkley was ordained September 3, 1747. The churches invited to the council were, the First Church, the New South, the Old South, Brattle Street, New North, New Brick, and the church in Charlestown. The church in Hollis Street was afterward added. Mr. Gee being at this time confined by sickness, the father of the candidate was requested to give the charge.

The conjunction of church and society in the management of their temporal concerns, first took place in May, 1760; at which time it was agreed, that the committee, chosen annually on the first Tuesday of May, should consist of the deacons, together with five members of the church, and four of the congregation.

(20.) p. 23. THE preliminary steps to the choice of Dr. Lathrop, were taken by the church and society, March 10, 1768. It was intended to ordain him as colleague to Mr. Checkley, who had been for a long time dangerously ill, and died on the 19th day of the same month. The election was made by a unanimous vote, both of church and congregation; the number of the former being twenty-five, and of the latter sixty-seven. The ordination took place May 18, 1768. The council was composed of the churches of Norwich and Lebanon, Connecticut; the Old South, the New Brick, the New North, and the churches in Hollis Street and Brattle Street. Dr. Sewall was moderator. Dr. Eliot introduced the service with prayer; the pastor elect preached from Philip. i. 17—*knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel;* Dr. Pemberton prayed and gave the charge; Dr. Sewall then prayed; and Mr. Byles gave the right hand of fellowship.

The practice of reading the lines of the psalms separately, was abolished May 26, 1771.

In January, 1773, a monthly church meeting was established for encouragement and assistance in matters of religion.

April 16, 1786. After several meetings, the church renewed their covenant engagements, with a new "declaration of faith and form of confederacy." At the same time a system of discipline and order in regard to Baptism and the Lord's Supper was drawn up and established. The chief design of this was to remove the obstacles which prevented the access of Christians to the table, to abolish the half-way covenant, and provide for the baptism of the children of every baptised parent,—receiving no publick confession of faith, except from those who design to keep *all* the ordinances of the Lord. Upon this system the church has ever since acted.

NOTES TO SERMON II.

(1.) p. 26. I BELIEVE that I have fairly stated the controversy at this time, which has not, even yet, lost all its interest. Some small circumstances I have gathered from tradition, but principally from the pamphlets published on this occasion, which I found in the Boston Athenæum,—to which copious repository of choice and rare publications relating to the history of this country, I am under many obligations. The first is, "An Account of the reasons why a considerable number (about fifty, whereof ten are members in full communion) belonging to the New North church in Boston, could not consent to Mr. Peter Thacher's ordination." It has this motto: "Ministers shall not be vagrants, nor intrude themselves of their own authority into any place which best pleaseth them." It is a pamphlet of sixty pages, being a collection of documents interwoven with an angry history of the whole matter. In reply, there is "A Vindication of the New North church from several falsehoods spread in a pamphlet lately published, &c.; by several members of that church:" to which are added, two postscripts by Mr. Webb and Mr. Thacher. Then was advertised, but I do not know whether it was published, "An Answer to a scandalous and lying pamphlet, intituled, a Vindication, &c." The New North people wrote with most moderation, though they were clearly in the wrong; while the advocates of the New Brick, though on the right side, lost all command of their temper, and wrote with great heat and passion.

There was also published, "A brief Declaration of Mr. P. Thacher and Mr. J. Webb, in behalf of themselves and their church." This was in reply to a pamphlet of Increase Mather, entitled "A Testimony to the good order of the churches;" blaming the proceedings of the New North as Anti-congregational, and threatening them with ecclesiastical discipline and censure. Webb and Thacher declared their intention to conduct regularly, according to Congregational discipline, and defended their doings as such.

The two Mathers sent a letter to the dissatisfied party the day preceding the ordination, earnestly entreating them to be quiet, and do nothing disorderly. It appears to have had no effect.

"July 19, 1722. It was agreed upon and voted, that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper should be administered in the revolution of every fourth sabbath from August 12, 1722."

(2.) p. 27. THE names of those gathered into a church state at this time were, Alexander Sears, Solomon Townsend, William Lee, Nathaniel Loring, Moses Pierse, Daniel Pecker, Josiah Baker, Henry Wheeler, John Waldo, James Tilestone. S. Townsend and W. Lee were chosen the first deacons.

The original covenant is not a profession of faith, except so far as a belief in the Christian religion, and in the doctrine of the trinity, is asserted; but is rather an engagement to walk strictly in the commandments and ordinances of the gospel. It being the custom of many churches at that time to require a relation of the religious experiences of those who offered themselves for admission, a vote was passed, (August 9, 1722,) "that we would receive them with, and encourage their making of relations according to the usage of many of our New England churches; but will not impose them on such as we shall find averse to them. But upon having our charity satisfied any other way, we will look upon them meet for our fellowship, and admit them to it."

The persons who commenced the building were in number twenty-four, whose names are recorded in the proprietors' books. The number increased to forty before the work was completed. The building committee (chosen December 12, 1720) consisted of John Frisel, Thomas Lee, Jonathan Montfort, Alexander Sears, James Tileston, James Pecker, and Edward Pell. This last named gentleman drew the plan of the house.—The choice of pews was made May 8, 1721, the first choice being given to John Frisel and William Clark, "for their good will and great benefactions to said work;"—then to the building committee;—and then to the other proprietors in an order determined by lot.

At the dedication, Dr. Increase Mather was first desired to preach, but excused himself on account of his great age. He commenced the morning service with prayer, which was closed with prayer by Mr. Cooper. The afternoon service commenced with prayer by Dr. Colman, and was closed by Mr. Prince.

A time-piece was presented to the church by Mr. Barret Dyre in June of this year. It kept its place in the meeting-house until 1820, when it was removed, and its place supplied with a new one at the expense of Samuel Parkman, Esq.

There was no cellar under the house until the year 1762. It was completed at the cost of a thousand pounds, and, after some difficulties, paid for by subscription.

In front of the pulpit were originally two pews, the one for the Elder's seat, the other for the Deacon's seat. They were thrown into one in 1766, "as has been lately done at the Old North, and at Mr. Cooper's," (Brattle Street.)

A second gallery was originally built only at the west end, and never, I believe, on either of the other sides. This was closed up and converted into a hall for a singing school and other purposes, in 1808. A vote passed in January, 1751, "to build an upper gallery for the women at the *east* end of the meeting-house, if the money can be raised by subscription." This however was not accomplished.—There was no access to the gallery originally, except by stairs within the meeting-house, of which there were three flights; at the north-west, south-west, and south-east corners. The stairs in the north-west corner were removed in ——. The south porch was so altered as to contain stairs for the accommodation of the singers in 1801. In 1821 it was taken down, rebuilt of a larger size, so as to contain stairs of an easy access, and those which remained in the south-east and south-west corners were removed. At the same time all the remaining square pews were taken down, and long pews erected in their room.

The first bell was hung in 1743, and the same year the meeting-house was for the first time painted. This bell was removed and sold in 1780, and the bell of the Old North, which was larger, was hung in its place. It was injured in 1792, and forbidden to be rung, except in case of fire, till it was recast in the same year, and was the first bell from the foundry of the late Paul Revere, Esq.—which appears by the following inscription upon it: "The first church bell cast in Boston, 1792, by P. Revere."

(3.) p. 27. Mr. Waldron was chosen minister, September 26, 1721, by a vote of the proprietors, fifty out of sixty-three. The other votes were for Mr. Gee. At his ordination, Mr. Sewall commenced with prayer; Dr. Cotton Mather preached from 1 John, iv. 7; Dr. Increase Mather gave the charge; Mr. Wadsworth the right hand of fellowship; and Mr. Waldron closed with prayer.

"August 23, 1725. Voted, that Mr. Waldron be supplied with constant help for six months ensuing from this day."—A vote of this nature was frequently passed in both churches, while there was but one minister; it being thought that the strength of one was inadequate to the whole duty.

Mr. Waldron died September 11, 1727.

(4.) p. 28. January 16, 1727. Mr. Welsteed was chosen by a vote of fifty-four out of sixty-four. At his ordination, Mr. Sewall and Mr. Coop-

er prayed; Dr. Colman gave the charge; and Mr. Walter the right hand of fellowship. "One of the first acts of the church after this ordination was to reconsider and renew the vote about relations, passed August 9, 1722.—A truly Christian act."

The reading of the scriptures, as part of the publick service, commenced in 1729, as appears by a vote of April 14,—"that the Bible Capt. Henry Deering has made an offer of to the church, in order for Mr. Welsteed's reading and expounding, be accepted."

December 22, 1736. Mr. William Hooper received a unanimous call to settle as colleague with Mr. Welsteed. He, however, on the third day of the next month, received a unanimous call from the West Church, on that day gathered, over which he was ordained May 18th, 1737. He afterward received Episcopal ordination, and was rector of Trinity Church.

In January, 1731, fifty pounds were collected at a contribution for the relief of the inhabitants of Marblehead, distressed by the small pox.

Mr. Gray was elected by a unanimous vote, April 3, 1738. The council at the ordination consisted of "the united churches in Boston, the churches of Rumny Marsh, (Chelsea,) Roxbury, Cambridge, and Charlestown." The pastor elect preached, from Isaiah vi. 5—8; Mr. Welsteed and Mr. Webb prayed; Dr. Colman gave the charge; and Dr. Sewall the right hand of fellowship.—The part taken by Mr. Webb is the earliest notice we have of a reconciliation with the New North church.

"August 22, 1739. Unanimously voted, to desire Mr. James Halsy to take his proper place in the Elder's seat.

"Voted, to leave the affair of making a stairway in the westernmost porch with the committee." This was never done.

(5.) p. 31. Dr. Pemberton was chosen, December 31, 1753, by a vote of fifty-four out of fifty-six, two persons not voting. The vote of the church was unanimous. He had resigned his charge at New York, by advice of the Synod, on the 18th of November, and was at that time in correspondence with this church, who had expressed their strong desire to receive him as their minister. Part of this correspondence appears on the pages of the proprietors' records; as also a copy of the doings of the Synod, by which he was dismissed with honour, and recommended as "a regular minister, of an exemplary, pious conversation, who has to an uncommon degree maintained the dignity of the ministerial character;—eminently endowed with ministerial abilities, whose labours have been acceptable and highly esteemed throughout these churches."

The council at the installation, March 6, 1754, consisted of the First, the Old South, and the New North churches. By whom the several parts were performed, I cannot learn. No entry is made upon the church book of records during Dr. Pemberton's ministry, except the names of a few bap-

tised and admitted to communion. The catalogue of church members, from the beginning, is exceedingly imperfect, so that no estimate at all can be made of the number.

It was during his ministry, [August, 1757,] that taxes were first laid for the support of the gospel in this society. Dependance had been previously had upon voluntary contributions collected every Sunday; but this mode had been found the occasion of so much confusion, embarrassment and debt, that it was now abolished. For many years, the income was insufficient to pay Dr. Pemberton's salary, and he every year generously relinquished his claim to the deficiency.

"October 7, 1762. Voted, that the singers sound the base at the end of the lines, whenever they think proper." I copy this vote simply because I do not know what it means.

In 1763, an attempt was made to settle a colleague with Dr. Pemberton, and Mr. Tennant was the man intended for the place. Circumstances, however, prevented the design from being accomplished.

In May, 1771, the first Baptist church requested that the use of the New Brick meeting-house might be allowed them for worship, during the time that they should be building; and accordingly, from June 23 to December 8, the two congregations worshipped together, their ministers preaching alternately the half of each sabbath. Dr. Stillman's first sermon was preached from Psalm cxxxiii. 1, and his last from 2 Corinthians, xiii. 11. In this place also it may be mentioned, that in June, 1802, when the New North society were about rebuilding their meeting-house, an invitation was given them to attend worship with this church, and the two congregations united in the services of the sabbath, until the completion of the new meeting-house in May, 1804.

(6.) p. 32. The British troops, during the blockade of Boston, treated the churches with particular disrespect. The steeple of the West Church they destroyed, because they supposed it had been used as a signal staff; the Old South they turned into a circus, or riding school; the Old North they took down for the sake of the fuel, of which its massy timber afforded abundance; "although there were then large quantities of coal and wood in the town. The house, which was built in 1677, was in very good repair, and might have stood many years longer, had not those sons of violence, with wicked hands, razed it to the foundation." *Church Records.*

The two societies worshipped together from the 31st of March, 1776; but the plan of perpetual union was not proposed until May 6th, 1779. On that day, which was the day of the state fast, a vote was passed, "that the two said churches should be united as one body," and a committee was appointed, of three from each society, with the deacons, to take the necessary measures toward accomplishing the affair. The committee on the part of

the Old North were, Samuel Austin, Col. Proctor, and Joseph Kittel; of the New Brick, William Paine, Newman Greenough, and Thomas Hichborn. The deacons were three; John Tudor, ——— Brown, and ——— Greenough. The committee reported on the 27th of June, and the union took place without one dissenting voice, in the most amicable manner, and under the most auspicious circumstances. The whole proceedings are recorded by Deacon Tudor with great minuteness.

In January, 1780, Dr. Lathrop's salary was raised from one hundred to two hundred dollars a week; in May to four hundred; in September to eight hundred. In December, £2000 were raised to purchase his winter's wood.

The large Bible, which was used in the Old North church, was presented by the committee, in behalf of the society, to the second church in Newton, at the time of Mr. Greenough's settlement there, in 1781.

In 1781 I find record of a baptism by immersion of a child about ten years old, at the particular request of the mother, "a bathing tub being prepared for that purpose in the meeting-house."

(7.) p. 33. On this occasion, the Rev. President Kirkland introduced the religious service with prayer; Dr. Ware preached from Philip. iv. 17, *I desire fruit that may abound to your account;* Rev. Mr. Fiske of West Cambridge made the ordaining prayer; Dr. Allyn of Duxbury gave the charge; Rev. Mr. Parkman presented the right hand of fellowship; Dr. Holmes of Cambridge made the concluding prayer.

I have said nothing in the sermon of the Synods in which Increase Mather was engaged. At the time of his arrival from England in 1662, the country was much excited and divided about the result of the Synod which had set in the spring of that year, and which had published certain propositions relating to church membership. The fifth of these, which provided, that the children of all who have been baptised in infancy, and are not scandalous in life, and make publick profession of faith, are entitled to baptism, —was the occasion of warm discussion. Mr. Mather, though but a young man, distinguished himself in the opposition to the Synod, who appointed Mr. Mitchel of Cambridge, so much praised by Baxter, to answer him. Mather was convinced by the arguments of Mitchel, and afterward published in defence of the proposition he had opposed.—The other writers in the controversy were Dr. Chauncy, president of the college, against the Synod, who was answered by Mr. Allin, of Dedham;—and Mr. Davenport of New Haven, who was answered by Mr. Mather the elder, father of Increase.

He was also an important member of the Synod of 1679, by which he was appointed one of the preachers, and moderator at its second session in 1680.

This was the *Reforming Synod*, called together to consider "What are the evils that have provoked the Lord to bring his judgments on New England; and what is to be done that so those evils may be reformed?" Mr. Emerson, in his History of the First Church, informs us, that this was occasioned by the long continued controversy between the First and Old South churches, and that the inquiry was in fact aimed against the Old South.

ERRATA.

Page 20, *for* 1684, *read* 1685.
—— 22, *for* 1745, *read* 1743.
—— — *for* September, *read* July.